
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 276 (File 71, as amended by Senate "A")*

AN ACT CONCERNING LICENSING REQUIREMENTS FOR ACUPUNCTURISTS.

SUMMARY:

This bill increases required didactic and clinical training for acupuncturist licensure applicants from 1,350 hours to 1,905 hours. It also increases required clinical training from 500 hours to 660 hours, as part of the total 1,905 required training hours. These increased requirements apply to applicants who complete their course of study on or after October 1, 2012.

Current law requires someone seeking acupuncturist licensure to pass a Department of Public Health (DPH)-prescribed examination. The bill alternatively allows applicants to pass all portions of the acupuncture certification examination required by the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM). In practice, DPH already requires applicants to pass the NCCAOM exam.

By law, acupuncturist licenses must be renewed every two years. Under the bill, for registration periods beginning on and after October 1, 2014, acupuncturists seeking license renewal must (1) have NCCAOM certification or (2) earn at least 30 contact hours of NCCAOM-approved continuing education within the preceding 24 months. It appears that these requirements do not apply to licensees applying for license renewal for the first time.

The bill sets related recordkeeping requirements. It also allows the DPH commissioner to grant extensions or waivers to the certification or continuing education requirements for medical reasons.

The bill also requires anyone whose acupuncturist license became void due to failure to renew it within 90 days of its expiration, and

who applies to DPH for license reinstatement, to submit evidence documenting (1) valid NCCAOM acupuncture certification or (2) successful completion of 15 contact hours of continuing education within the year before applying for reinstatement.

The bill also makes technical changes.

*Senate Amendment "A" (1) specifies that the increase in required didactic and clinical training does not apply to applicants who completed their course of study before October 1, 2012; (2) adds the reference to applicants passing "all portions" of the NCCAOM examination; (3) makes several changes regarding license renewal, such as adding the provisions on continuing education and making the bill's requirements apply to registration periods beginning on and after October 1, 2014; and (4) adds the provision on license reinstatement.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2012

CERTIFICATION OR CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR LICENSE RENEWAL

Attestation and Recordkeeping

Under the bill, someone applying to renew his or her acupuncturist license, except for a first license renewal, must sign a statement, on a DPH-prescribed form, attesting that he or she has satisfied the bill's certification or continuing education requirements. Presumably, this requirement would not apply before the certification or continuing education requirements take effect (registration periods that begin on or after October 1, 2014).

The bill also requires acupuncturist licensees to:

1. keep their records of attendance or certificates of completion showing compliance with the continuing education or certification requirements for at least five years after completing the continuing education or renewing their certification and
2. submit these records to DPH for inspection within 45 days of DPH's request.

Waiver or Extension

The bill allows the DPH commissioner to grant a waiver or time extension for completing these continuing education or certification requirements for reasons of medical disability or illness. Someone seeking such a waiver or extension must submit to DPH (1) an application, on a form the commissioner prescribes; (2) a licensed physician's certification of the disability or illness; and (3) any other documentation DPH may require.

The bill allows the commissioner to grant a waiver or extension for up to one registration period. She can grant additional waivers or extensions if the disability or illness continues beyond the waiver or extension period and the licensee applies to DPH for an additional waiver or extension.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 25 Nay 0 (03/09/2012)